

Thorns 'n Roses

From community submissions

Roses to:

Steve Morton of Community Bank on Patch Barracks. My husband and I would like to express our heartfelt gratitude for Mr. Morton's efficient and compassionate service — which made a difficult time much easier for us. He truly made a difference.



Mitch, Jinx and Rudy at the Kelley Community Club. The club may not have the finest furnishings in all of Germany, but I doubt if there is a more welcoming environment or friendly staff at any MWR facility. As the recent Super Bowl party proved, these three gentlemen ensure that spending time in the Kelley Club is always an enjoyable experience.

The snow-removal personnel who worked hard the previous few weeks to keep our installation streets and sidewalks clean during what seemed like a never-ending snowstorm in Southern Germany.

Thorns to:

The thoughtless people who are using handicap parking spaces to facilitate their laziness. Shame on you! Furthermore, the office that hands out the permits needs to ensure that the individuals receiving them actually need them, as it appears to me that too many people are abusing this privilege.

Drivers who can't find parking spots near the Swabian Special Events Center and, instead, deposit their vehicles into the first open space they find on Vermontstrasse. Apparently, you haven't noticed the very clear markings that reserve these spots for residents of stairwell buildings along the street.

E-mail comments to citizen@6asg.army.mil or fax them to 421-2570/civ. 0711-729-2570.

Final choices show veteran's enduring love for Air Force

By Maj. John J. Thomas

Commentary

Reid S. Wyant is dying. His daughter called me the other day looking for help putting together the items so that he could be buried in his Air Force service dress uniform.

He served 30 years as an airman. And it seems he's still one of us.

I got to thinking: What makes a person who has lived life as a civilian since 1980 want to be buried in his uniform?

I like to think maybe "Service Before Self" gets into your blood. After all, retired Senior Master Sgt. Wyant switched his cancer treatment from Eglin Air Force Base not too long ago because the war was forcing them to cut back care, and he wanted the active-duty people to get taken care of first.

"Always thinking of others," says his daughter, Andrae Harris.

Harris is helping care for her father as he edges closer to the end. She helps him plan it all out. Arlington National Cemetery was overruled by his wife, who wants him for eternity closer to family. Details like that.

Andrae says she always knew her dad was a hero. He was awarded the Airman's Medal for saving three swimmers' lives "in front of my very eyes, without a care to his own safety."

He almost lost his own life doing it, she says. And that pales in comparison to his courage facing his cancer.

Sgt. Wyant might say it is the friends you find that make the Air Force something you want to be buried with.

"I've never known anyone that did not like my dad," his daughter says.

A former commander, Col. Roger Andersen, still visits him at home. "They would both reenlist today," if they could, Andrae tells me.

Reid Wyant's life with the Air Force began when the young Air Force had been around for just seven years. "His uncle was a rear admiral and told him to join the Air Force," Andrae says. Seems his uncle was a smart man.

"He caught a bus to Pittsburgh and never looked back," she says.

I think he's looking back now.

Looking back on the people he met as a munitions maintenance specialist and first sergeant. Born and raised in Kitanning, Pa., he served in North Africa in the '50s; Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos and Korea in the '60s. In 1971 he was in Thailand.

And he was in plenty of stateside places in between. But

Wyant switched his cancer treatment from Eglin Air Force Base because the war was forcing them to cut back care, and he wanted the active-duty people to get taken care of first.

no assignment was more important than the move from Denver to Bentwaters, England.

That's where a boy, dirt-poor and often mistreated by his grandfather, a guy who dropped out of school and put his kid brother through college — well, England is where he met his wife, Doreen. To hear Andrae tell it, her mom's whole family fell in love with him.

As much, it seems, as he loved the Air Force.

Upon retirement from his second career, Sgt. Wyant moved from Dallas to near Eglin where he fried fish and chicken for squadron picnics. And where a couple of years ago he was first treated for cancer.

And it was to Eglin that he went recently with his family to get all of his affairs together and prepare a final will.

I have never met Sgt. Wyant. But I have worked with people just like him every day of my 12 years in the Air Force. I have served with loyal members of every service. And I am off to Iraq soon to work again with the State Department and other agencies.

People tell me to keep my head down when I go to Iraq. Instead I think I'll hold my head high, out of respect for people like Sgt. Wyant and all those he represents, like my own dad, and my father-in-law.

When Andrae asked him the other day "why the service dress uniform for the burial?" he said that is what he has always worn for important events, and he wanted his family to recognize him. His sense of humor is still healthy.

Maybe one day, I will ask to be buried in my service dress uniform, like Senior Master Sgt. Reid S. Wyant wants to be, "with full military honors."

In his case, the honor will be ours.

Thomas is assigned to the Air Force Personnel Center Public Affairs Office.

IN THE MAIL

Writer reminds morning drivers to obey German road rules when entering Patch

Iwould like to remind drivers of the following "right of way" issue, especially where it applies to entering Patch Barracks in the morning.

Under German law, unless otherwise posted, vehicles approaching from the right have priority over the vehicles coming from the left.

This applies to Patch Barracks most often in the following situation:

Before drivers get to the front gate at Patch Barracks in the morning, there is an MP who waves some vehicles to the back gate. These vehicles are directed to turn onto Bondorfer Strasse.

When drivers who turn onto Bondorfer Strasse get to the "T" in the road, they do not have to stop for the traffic coming from the left.

The cars already on Kürmarker have to stop for the driver making the right turn from Bondorfer Strasse.

The Citizen shared Rice's concerns with a representative of the 6th Area Support Group Provost Marshal's Office and received the following response:

While the writer's interpretation of German law as it applies to the Kürmarker-Bondorfer intersection is correct, drivers must remember that it is illegal to force the right of way.

Thus, even though a driver turn-

ing right onto Kürmarker from Bondorfer has the right-of-way, he or she would likely be found at least partially liable for any accident that resulted from pulling out in front of an oncoming vehicle that is already on Kürmarker Strasse.

In other words, we're all on the road together. Courtesy and cooperation continue to be the keys to safe driving.

To put this in another perspective, if you are coming the back way from Panzer to the back gate on Patch (down Pascal Strasse to unter Waldplatz and then onto Kürmarker Strasse), you must yield to the traffic coming from the main gate.

Yes, Kürmarker Strasse is a straight

street, and cars on Bondorfer Strasse must turn but, unless I missed something, neither has a priority road sign.

Remember: right before left. Let's not have any accidents out there.

Barry Rice
Stuttgart

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The Citizen is an offset press publication printed in 6,500 copies every two weeks.

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